



Nature's Way Preschool Enrichment Program

NWPS Program Goals and Objectives

To teach elementary skills: observing, classifying, measuring, hypothesizing, communicating, collecting data, predicting and experimenting.

To stimulate and reinforce children's curiosity of nature.

To develop knowledge of and instill appreciation for our natural resources.

To provide opportunities for children to develop self-confidence while exploring their natural surroundings.

To provide children with opportunities to make connections with and feel a part of the natural world.

Frequently Asked Questions:

What is the student to teacher ratio at NWPS? The ratio is never larger than 8:1.

Does NWPS offer tours? Yes. Tours are scheduled October—March, Tuesday—Friday. Families can email Bonnie Cook, NWPS director, at bonnie.cook@austintexas.gov or leave her a voice mail at 512-974-3882.

What ages does NWPS serve? Preschool aged children of 3—5 years. NWPS has 1 class of 3 year olds and 2 classes of 4&5 year olds each day. No diapers, please.

Does NWPS offer all day weeklong care? No, NWPS is an enrichment program that is offered during the school year for half days up to 4 days a week.

What class time are available? NWPS offers Morning and Afternoon classes. **AM-**Monday-Friday 9:00 am-1:00 pm, **PM-** Tuesday and Thursday 2:00 pm-5:00 pm

Where are the classes located? Classes are held at the Ashford-McGill Trailhouse building on the Austin Nature & Science Center grounds

How long is the wait for a space in NWPS? The wait is usually 1 year.

How do I get on the wait list? E-mail Bonnie Cook, the preschool director, at bonnie.cook@austintexas.gov or leave her a voice mail at 512-974-3882.



Curriculum Overview

Nature's Way Preschool children take part in an active program designed to help them explore and fully experience their own environment. Instructors emphasize hands-on discovery and allow the children to experiment with a variety of ideas and materials at his/her own pace. Activities are provided in science, art, creative dramatics, music, body movement, and outdoor exploration. Daily activities are geared toward helping children understand themselves and their world according to their own needs, interests, and abilities.

The curriculum begins by asking the question, **'Who in the world am I?'** and encourages the children to become more aware of their feelings, personal care, and body composition. This section also examines other animals that share our world and the similarities and differences between us.

Once the children have a greater understanding of themselves and other living creatures, the curriculum raises the question, **'Where in the world do we all fit in?'** The children will be given opportunities to explore their own environment as well as those of the animals they have studied. They will spend time learning about how animals and people work together; about creatures that live in our own back yards and about how harvesting food is important to us and our fellow creatures alike.

Upon returning from winter break, the preschoolers will spend some time considering, **"What in the world is this Earth made of?"** They will explore this question as they learn ways to take care of the Earth based on their knowledge of biomes, and dig into and investigate the land and water. They will learn more about dinosaurs and creatures who lived on our planet before us and will investigate what is under the ground beneath our feet and in the sky above our heads.

The final component of the curriculum challenges the preschoolers to use all of their previously gained knowledge to explore answers to the question, **"How in the world can I get my hands into it all?"** At this point, the children will be equipped with the confidence and the curiosity to build a garden from seed, investigate the day and night skies, and learn about cycles of nature and the Texas beaches.

The overall structure of the curriculum allows a logical progression through the topics. This makes the subjects more meaningful to the children while also enabling them to use prior learning to acquire new knowledge.

**For additional information, please contact Bonnie Cook at
bonnie.cook@austintexas.gov or 512-974-3882.**

